

2012 State of the Town Address

Good afternoon and Happy New Year.

It is my pleasure to join you to present my State of the Town remarks. I appreciate the Purcellville Business and Professional Association's invitation.

As always the Council deeply appreciates all that the Association and its members do to make Purcellville a great place to live and raise a family.

Celebrating Success

I am pleased to report the State of the Town is strong and the future for our community is bright.

As I pointed out in last year's remarks independent verification of the outstanding economic development progress we have made can be found in the Loudoun County Department of Economic Development Report entitled, "State of the Towns 2010".

The report stated, "The towns clearly are hubs for economic activity, serve as great locations to start and grow a business, and offer quality of life amenities that people search out when choosing a location for their home or business."

We need to celebrate the success we have achieved over the past year. 2011 was a year of substantial progress in a number of areas that continue to move our Town forward as a leader. Business licenses were up 22% in 2011 as compared to 2009.

2012 State of the Town Address

- With the renewed energy of several merchants and property owners in our historic downtown and in cooperation with the Town, we not only improved traffic flow on 21st Street, but also increased the number of parking spaces. And, public parking is free year round in Purcellville – not just during the holidays. Further, our Planning Commission is considering amendments to our parking ordinance to provide greater flexibility in ordinance requirements to achieve the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Phase 1 of our [Downtown Improvement Project](#) is moving towards completion and we have been awarded additional Federal and State funds to move forward with Phase 2.
- The first annual [Loudoun Grown Expo](#) was very successful with more than 1,000 folks visiting from all around the region. We expect this year’s event will be just as successful and we are delighted with the response to date.
- Our Main Street is thriving. Between the Purcellville Gateway and Shoppes at Main and Maple projects we anticipate nearly 400 local jobs will be created when those projects are completed. When Governor McDonnell was running for office one of the centerpieces of his campaign was “Bob is for Jobs”. Well so is this Bob, so is our Council, so are our residents, our staff and our business community.
- We completed our first-ever citizen and business surveys, which provided independent and informative feedback as to the services we provide our citizens and business community.

2012 State of the Town Address

- To provide data and information to our citizens we are the first municipality in Loudoun to publish an on-line performance dashboard. This data can be found at Purcellvilledashboard.com. I am proud our Town was awarded a Certificate of Distinction from the ICMA Center for Performance Measurement.
- The Town-wide Tag Sale was a tremendous success and the Christmas in Purcellville program surpassed all expectations. The streets were packed, the restaurants and stores busy and most importantly, many smiles on the faces of those who enjoyed the day with us.

I can tell you the challenge to staff is the Council is not satisfied with the status quo. We must continue to innovate and collaborate to build upon the successes we have achieved together.

As such I am proposing several items I will be asking Council and staff to pursue for the coming months.

- We are all aware of the stories of how Microsoft, Apple and other companies were started in the garages of folk's homes. We are blessed in Purcellville to have a strong home-based business community. As such, I am proposing to Council for 2012 we host a Home Based Business Expo at the Tabernacle to highlight the great home based businesses we have right here in Purcellville.
- With the completion of Phase 1 of our Downtown Improvement Project we have a great opportunity as the center of commerce in western Loudoun to

2012 State of the Town Address

attract additional visitors to our community. As such, I am proposing to Council for 2012 we host the first-ever Purcellville Wine Festival in our historic downtown – the capital of wine country.

- On April 11 the Town will host a Job Fair to provide one stop shopping for residents who are looking for employment. Harris-Teeter has already committed to participate in this event and we are reaching out to other businesses to ask for their participation in this program.
- To attract a small hotel to our community I believe the Council needs to take proactive measures. As such, I am asking the Council to consider the creation of a Tourism Economic Development Zone in our historic downtown for the sole purpose of bringing a first-class hospitality vendor to our Town. It is clear that a hotel in our historic downtown would serve our entire community greatly and provide the needed critical mass for our downtown for generations.

I believe these activities build on the strengths of Purcellville.

Strong Fiscal Performance

With strong fiscal discipline and management the news from Town Hall once again is positive.

We ended fiscal year 2011 with a surplus and in keeping with our fiscal policies the Town's rainy day fund has grown. Furthermore, the Council for five consecutive years has adopted a tax rate that either equalizes or cuts Town taxes.

2012 State of the Town Address

In recognition of the Town's outstanding performance our Consolidated Annual Financial Report and budget received national awards. Less than 1% of the municipalities of our size in the entire nation have been so recognized. Purcellville is the smallest jurisdiction in Virginia to receive a Distinguished Budget Award.

Public Safety

I am so very proud of the men and women of our Police Department. Not only is that service recognized locally, but internationally as well.

While there was not much publicity surrounding it, our Police Department won an award from the International Chiefs of Police Association for our community-policing program. While there are some who may question as why we have our own Police Department, I can tell you there is no question in my mind the importance our dedicated officers play as a critical element of the quality of life we enjoy as a community.

In honor of our first responders the Town's dedication of our First Responders Monument on the 10th Anniversary of September 11 was an overwhelming success. The monument is a fitting testament to the first responders who serve our community and it is a poignant reminder of the dangers they face on a daily basis.

Transportation

Much is happening on the transportation front and I am excited by the progress we are making.

2012 State of the Town Address

With respect to the Southern Collector Road (SCR) the Town has taken the necessary steps to complete this long-planned and needed roadway. The final segment of what is now known as W.T. Druhan, Jr. Boulevard will be out to bid for construction this month.

We are grateful to Governor Bob McDonnell for his leadership in advancing a proactive transportation agenda. As a result the Town was awarded \$2.8 million for the SCR project. Additionally, the Town obtained funding from the Commonwealth in excess of \$400,000 to make improvements to the Town maintained portion of Hirst Road. A long awaited turn lane improvement on Southbound 287 at Hirst Road has been completed by VDOT at the request of the Town. And, after more than two decades the entire length of Main Street was repaved by VDOT contract forces. We are grateful for our partners in State government.

Transportation, however, is not just about cars.

I am pleased to report we completed the North Maple Avenue sidewalk and trail improvement project. In addition, the 21st Street sidewalk project is underway and will be completed in the late winter/early spring. In total, over the last several years there has been 9,482 linear feet of public sidewalk, nearly two miles, placed in the Town. There are additional sidewalk improvement projects that are being contemplated which will continue the work of making Purcellville a more pedestrian friendly community.

Protecting the Environment

2012 State of the Town Address

Once again our Town won a “Go Green” award from the Virginia Municipal League. Furthermore, we again achieved Tree City USA status with a growth award. Nearly 800 trees were planted in Purcellville last year. What an outstanding effort!

To continue to protect our open space the Town was pleased to accept the most generous donation of nearly 16 acres by Beverly Bowman Chaisson on the western border of our Town. The property will remain open space.

Our continued community shred and prescription drug collection program was a success. As such, we will once again combine the two for a collection program – you can empty out your old file cabinet and medicine cabinet at the same event.

Protecting our environment not only has quality of life benefits, but saves taxpayers money as well. Our pilot LED Street Light was expanded with the receipt of a Federal grant, which allowed for the installation of 42 LED Street Lights on Main Street. Purcellville has one of the largest LED pilot programs in the entire Commonwealth.

To assist our local neighborhoods in making improvements to open space in their neighborhoods, I am recommending to Council the establishment of a Neighborhood Improvement Fund to assist in the beautification of public spaces in our community. I will be requesting our Environment Committee to work with the Council and staff to further develop this effort.

Working with Loudoun County

2012 State of the Town Address

I am pleased to report that I have already had a very productive meeting and several conversations with our Supervisor and Board Vice-Chairman, Janet Clarke, regarding a number of matters of importance to our community. Janet has been more than generous with her time and I can tell you she fully understands the needs of our community. We have offered Supervisor Clarke an informal district office in Town Hall to assist her in her daily duties as Supervisor.

Working together I am hopeful we will see gas tax funding restored to our Town, forward movement on the Route 690 Interchange Project and coordination and cooperation with respect to economic development issues. These are just a number of areas where we are in agreement. Further, we are meeting in February as members of the PUGAMP Committee to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Purcellville Pride

There is much to take great pride in our community. The Town government is committed to ensure the actions we take preserve and protect the small town character and quality of life we so enjoy. We are thankful for our citizen volunteers who help in these efforts.

Our renovations to the Tabernacle have been completed and I am proud to say it is well used. The renovated Tabernacle provides a unique venue in Northern Virginia for special events and meetings. The parking lot improvement project has received overwhelmingly positive comments from users and our Town now has a civic center consistent with our Comprehensive Plan that will well serve our community for decades.

2012 State of the Town Address

As you know, Purcellville has been awarded the World Series for 2013, which we are happy to host at what we consider the best amateur baseball field on the East Coast. I am also pleased to report we have been awarded the Southeast Regional Babe Ruth tournament for this coming August.

As a part of the Southeast Regional tournament I am proposing a pilot business loyalty program in cooperation with our small businesses and the Business Association. During that weeklong period folks who spend \$25 with a participating small business will receive a \$5 gift card or token in return to further spend with our small businesses. Judging upon the success of that program I am hopeful we can expand it to include other times of the year when business traffic is slower.

I must give sincere thanks to the members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee for their successful “Rock the Field” event that brought literally hundreds of families to Fireman’s Field for free entertainment.

As a Town we are fortunate to have an active faith community that adds so greatly to the quality of life of our Town. The multi-faith “Tree of Life” ministry, which encompasses a food bank and job seekers program, is a great example of how our faith community works together in a common mission to address critically important issues. This ministry has partnered with groups as the Boys Scout and Upper Loudoun Youth Football League to help collect literally tons of food for those who are less fortunate. To all that contribute to this worthy cause, thank you.

Conclusion

2012 State of the Town Address

In conclusion I would like to thank the members of the Council. I am proud to serve with them.

We are also fortunate as a community to have a dedicated, loyal and hard working staff. They, like the Council, put the needs of the community ahead of their own personal self-interests. I know speaking for the Council we are eternally grateful.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not take the time to publically thank Carolyn, my wonderful wife, and Kathryn our daughter for their support of my efforts. In fact, I thank all of the families of our Council Members, Commission members, volunteers and staff for their support of their spouses. Without their support and understanding it would make a difficult job, even more challenging. We are grateful for their support.

Thank you once again for allowing me to join with you today.

God Bless Purcellville.